



**MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba CANADA
R3C 0V8

Dear Osborne House Board of Directors:

As you are aware, since March 2012 my staff has worked intensely with your Executive Director regarding a number of operational and programming issues that have been of concern.

Through this period however, a number of serious issues were brought to our attention. Information gathered through this process suggested that services being provided to clients were not in keeping with the Service Purchase Agreement and that safety and health procedures were not being followed, or were not in place. (Including concerns about security, clients not receiving a reasonable level of service, and a toxic work environment etc.)

This subsequently led to two recent reviews being conducted to ensure that issues were being adequately addressed, clients were being provided with the proper services and that the safety of the women, children and employees of Osborne house was assured.

These reports are the Osborne House Women's Shelter File Review report prepared by Roberta J. Graham and the Workplace Assessment Status Report prepared by Hill Advisory Services.

I understand that a work place assessment was completed and presented to Osborne House in April. As a follow up to this, a Workplace Assessment Status Report was prepared by Hill Advisory to determine the progress made by Osborne House with respect to the original recommendations and the serious concerns identified by the report. This follow up report brought to light an alarming lack of progress with respect to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Workplace Assessment Report.

In addition, the Osborne House Women's Shelter File Review Report prepared by Roberta J. Graham leads us to believe that the current situation at Osborne House threatens the health and safety of clients, including the following areas:

- a) Quality and frequency of resident counselling
- b) Failure to address protection planning in a timely manner, resulting in incomplete protection planning for residents leaving Osborne House;
- c) Documentation on one file of a resident of possible child abuse, but no evidence of any follow up documentation that the abuse had been reported;
- d) Storage and distribution of medication to residents;
- e) Response to safety concerns identified in recommendation 13 of the Workplace Assessment;
- f) Hostile work environment; and
- g) Communication between employees with other employees, and management has broken down.

In addition to these concerns, there has also been a failure to provide government with information concerning Child Abuse Registry Checks, Criminal Record Checks and Adult Abuse Registry Checks for staff and volunteers of Osborne House.

Accordingly, an immediate plan of action to Manitoba's satisfaction must be developed within the next 7 days by Osborne House to address these serious issues and concerns, and to ensure that the services are being provided in accordance with the Service Purchase Agreement.

I have designated Marlene Bertrand and Leanne Ellard to meet with voting Board members of Osborne House, who will make themselves available on Friday, September 20, 2013 at 5:00 pm in order to begin the process of establishing a plan of action to address these serious issues and concerns. This meeting will take place at 4022-300 Carlton Street.

I expect that Ms. Bertrand and Ms. Ellard will receive your utmost cooperation in order that they are able to share their expertise in a free and open manner with the voting Board members.

It is my expectation that in short order Osborne House will resume its high standard of service delivery to vulnerable women and children resident in the shelter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Howard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Howard